



## COMPETE PROJECT

*Strengthening the competitiveness and export potential of key sectors essential to the future prosperity of the Palestinian economy*

**Weekly report:  
Aug 12 – Aug 16**

Submitted by DAI to USAID, West Bank Gaza  
Date Submitted: August 16, 2012

## **AGRIBUSINESS SECTOR**

### **ACTIVITIES & PROJECT INTERMEDIATE RESULTS**

#### **Olive and Olive Oil Rollout**

- This week the Ag team conducted a field visit to Salfeet Governorate, where Compete is testing supplementary irrigation on 10 sites. The team visited two sites, one in the city of Salfeet and the other in Kufr Al Deek village. Salfeet currently produces over 500 tons of olive oil annually. Following the initial ground preparation the rollout is now in its second stage and will be implemented on approximately 1,200 olive trees across the West Bank. As most olive trees in the region rely on rainfall, the supplementary irrigation is expected to increase the size of the olives and yield. In selecting the farmers participating in the rollout, engineers and Compete looked at a variety of factors, such as willingness to participate, size and accessibility of the land (most farmers own 5 dunams). Initial round of irrigation was Aug 15th; next dates are Sept 1st and Sept 15th.

*Intermediate result contributed to: Linking Local Value Chain to International Value Chain*

#### **Contract Farming - Partnerships for Growth**

- “Contract Farming has taken a weight off me and my family. I can now concentrate on what I do best: growing quality product and knowing that I do not have to worry about future sales,” a quote from Mr. Ahmad Diab, a farmer taking advantage of contract farming.
- Compete views the Contract Farming system as a long-term partnership between agribusiness and farmers where both parties benefit equally. This is a pure business model, versus a development model, as it is based solely on economic and technical realities.
- This week saw the ratification between Al Salam Factory and Messrs. Mowafaq and Ahmad Diab, of an initial pre-order of 800 tons of red potatoes from the upcoming harvest, a major contract farming milestone that Compete has initiated and designed to support production and market linkage.
- Additionally as an agent and distributor for imported tractors, Al Salam is also in talks with these farmers to supply these inputs on a long-term payments basis.

*Intermediate result contributed to: Categories for Skilled Workforce to Increase Demand*

#### *Milestones:*

- ✓ Two contracts signed for 800 tons of red potatoes, value \$200,000 USD
- ✓ Pre-negotiations inputs and production service by Al Salam with growers
- ✓ Pre-negotiations for new crops to be produced such as sweet corn and carrots.

#### **CIBER**

- The final CIBER workshop for the Fresh Herbs and Date sectors took place on Aug 14<sup>th</sup> as a follow up to the presentation held in July in Jericho. Over the past month, Compete analyzed the Jericho workshop discussions and feedback, which resulted in the 2<sup>nd</sup> workshop prioritizing the top constraints of each sector that includes:

**Top priorities for the Fresh Herbs sector:**

- Insufficient access to water
- Lack of qualified and trusted nurseries in the PA
- Lack of accredited labs to conduct testing for pesticide residues
- Insufficient number of MoA inspectors and equipment

**Top priorities for the Date sector:**

- Insufficient access to water (waste water treatment and desalination)
- Pest infestation: Red Palm Weevil
- Lack of access to pollen

- The ultimate goal is to overcome these anti-competitive impediments and grow exports for long-term sustainability of these sectors. COMPETE is currently addressing these impediments in partnership with stakeholders through its various ongoing activities as outlined in the year 1 work plan.

*Milestones:*

- ✓ Final presentation CIBER – priorities identified for immediate action



*Farmer Diab signing contract farming*



*Farmer Mowafaq signing contract farming*



*New Machinery purchased by Al Salam from the US for manufacturing Sprint Chips*

***Forecast for next two weeks:***

- Aqua 4D (Saline Demo) identifying on site all required fixing and valves (Aug 23<sup>rd</sup>)
- Installation of Pheromone traps “Red Palm Weevil” in the Jordan Valley
- Finalizing laboratories equipment needs for upgrade and future international certification.
- Finalizing Nurseries needs for upgrade and certifications
- Final preparation for World Food Fair in Moscow with attendees
- Installation of Aqua 4D Saline Equipment on proposed sites with Swiss Team (Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- Upcoming visit to Jordan (September 1-5) with Palestinian MOA/Farmers to visit waste water treatment in Jordan to be replicated in the West Bank.
- Work plan – year 2 proposed activities and roll out of current activities

## TOURISM SECTOR

### ACTIVITIES & PROJECT INTERMEDIATE RESULTS

#### Hotel Classification

- Significant progress has been made with the Hotel Classification (HC) activity. Firstly, in creating an actual public-private partnership between MoTA and the Arab Hotel Association, secondly in bringing an understanding of international best practice requirements, and thirdly in providing the needed support from start to implementation to sustainability. To move forward with the implementation, Compete finalized two important documents that will constitute the basis of the implementation process: 1) a draft customized Palestinian quality standards for hotel classification and, 2) a draft schedule for assessors and trainers recruitment and training. A meeting is scheduled for Aug 27<sup>th</sup> where both documents will be presented to the HC Steering Committee for their review, input and agreement. Once agreement is reached actual implementation will start.

#### *Milestones:*

- ✓ Draft customized Palestinian Quality Standards HC plan
- ✓ Draft schedule for assessors and trainers recruitment and training

#### Site Renovation and Rehabilitation

- An initial agreement within the PPP Task Force was reached on possible short-term quick impact interventions for each of the five priority sites. A short description of progress on each site follows:

##### **Birqin Church**

Compete's short term intervention will entail the introduction of an interpretation room in the grounds of the church. To this regard, an RFP has been drafted and covers development of the concept, design and presentation of a self-telling and engaging interpretation room.

##### **Bethany**

An RFP has been drafted to introduce a walking trail that is self-telling, inviting, to also include provision of shading, benches and general beautification elements to improve visitor's experience. A museum concept including an inventory of available artifacts for display concept is currently being drafted by MoTA/DoA and USAID's Compete.

##### **Hisham's Palace**

Draft plans of zoning, visitor flow, engagement and interpretation have begun. A museum concept including an inventory of available artifacts for display is being drafted by MOTA/DOA and USAID's Compete.

## **Sabastiya**

An RFP is under development by a joint team of: MoTA/DoA, Municipality of Sabastiya and USAID's Compete Project to provide directional signs to and within Sabastiya.

## **Taybeh**

Directional signs and destination map: an RFP is under development by MoTA/DoA, Municipality of Taybeh and USAID's Compete to provide directional signs to and within Taybeh and to develop a number of destination and location maps of the site and its attractions.

Heritage and culture center: a concept plan is being developed to support the launch of an integrated attraction of Taybeh tradition and culture. A thematic approach will be used that combines industrial tourism (the tradition of olive production and stone quarrying, food, herbs), the living culture and cultural engagement in a center that will also be the focal point for all information provision for sites, events and attractions of Taybeh.

Linking main road to old town: Compete is drafting an RFP to link the main road to the old town and to finalize the incomplete paving and restorative work. This is expected to result in a greater sense of arrival to the old town of Taybeh.

### ***Intermediate result contributed to: # of Palestinian Products & Services Meeting International Standards or Specifications***

- Global Access for specific sites: Quick impact intervention in both Bethany and Birqin church seeks to deliver Global Access sites fulfilling the requirements of visitors with disabilities. These will be pilots for a broader Global Access program in the longer term.

#### ***Milestone:***

- ✓ Short-term quick impact interventions identified and agreed upon

## **Hospitality School Activity:**

Work has been underway to finalize the HS implementation plan by early September. This week we have achieved:

- Identification of physical area and facilities required to fulfill the proposed needs of the HS conducted by an engineering consultant.
- Identification and finalization of legal issues including project ownership, management licensing and regulation requirements conducted by Compete's legal advisor.
- Familiarization visits to 3 perspective school sites with further sites will be visited in the coming period.

### ***Intermediate result contributed to: Categories for Skilled Workforce to Increase Demand***



*Birqin Church – making it globally accessible*



*Taybeh Village – development of tourism destination*

***Forecast for the two next week:***

- HC steering committee meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> of August, presentation of draft plans
- Release ToR for the photographers to develop the image bank.
- Finalize the hospitality school implementation plan
- Brand messaging plan agreed upon.
- Ongoing development of RfP for the intervention for each of the five sites.
- Commencing the development of Facebook application for tourism.
- Finalizing 20 web clinic reviews.



## **ICT SECTOR**

### **ACTIVITIES & PROJECT INTERMEDIATE RESULTS**

#### **Hi-Tech Hub Event**

- The **Hi-Tech Hub event**, the new name of the previously proposed Connect Ramallah event is scheduled to take place on the 12<sup>th</sup> of September.
- A steering committee has been formed to oversee the preparation and implementation of the event. Its members include representatives of relevant local institutions (who will eventually own the event) such as PICTI, PEAKS, Excellence Centers, in addition to Compete ICT Sector Lead and Communications team.
- Progress to date includes:
  - Development of the Agenda
  - Securing two international speakers and two local speakers (The main speaker of the event is Ayman Irsheed of Areeba Company, UAE, [www.areebaareeba.com](http://www.areebaareeba.com)).
  - Connecting with existing networks to guarantee large participation of targeted groups
  - Contracting a PR company (Al Nasher) who have secured the venue and submitted their PR and event management plan. Their plan include the setup, activities, and media outreach
  - The event's logo and theme has been designed and developed.
  - Sub-message has been developed "Connect – Innovate –Lead" to signify this event as a place where participants are able to connect with successful entrepreneurs and learn from their experiences and have their own innovation.

***Intermediate result contributed to: Categories for Skilled Workforce to Increase Demand***

#### ***Forecast for next two weeks:***

- Hi-Tech Hub event planning
- Final PR plan and budget will be submitted
- Media outreach activities will continue

## **STONE & MARBLE SECTOR**

### **ACTIVITIES & PROJECT INTERMEDIATE RESULTS**



## Trade Show Participation

- Verona **Trade Show** (September 25-29) preparations continue with details regarding booth design, construction, types of samples and logistics.
- In the process of setting up meetings in Italy with companies that process sludge, marketing agents, technical institutions and filter press manufacturers, as well as equipment suppliers concentrating on sludge and recycling technology.

***Intermediate result contributed to: Linking Local Value Chain to International Value Chain***

### *Milestones:*

- ✓ Contracts signed with Al-Waleed for Cutting Stone Co, Verona Marble Investment Co and Next Step for Trade and Investment for upcoming trade shows

## Sector and CIBER progress financial modeling – identified sector challenges

- Meeting with local CIBER team took place Aug 15<sup>th</sup> to discuss financial modeling of constraints and upcoming workshop scheduled for the second week of September.

## Filter Press Evaluation and Maintenance

- COMPETE initiated the **Filter Press Evaluation** this week that includes a sector-wide assessment of filter press evaluations. Evaluations entail an assessment and costing of repair or upgrading.

## Sludge New Product Development

- Meeting took place to discuss future plans for new products from **sludge** on August 12<sup>th</sup> with a group of 5 companies located in Bethlehem's industrial zone who are looking to establish a new company to manufacture new products from sludge. These products include industrial artificial stone, gypsum board and plaster 'sheed' for wall (construction).
- Currently scheduling meetings with another 2 groups of investors from Hebron and Nablus who are interested in new products that could be extracted from dry sludge

***Intermediate result contributed to: # of Palestinian Products & Services Meeting International Standards or Specifications***

### *Milestones:*

- ✓ Contract signed with Lamar to undertake Filter Press Evaluations

## Preparations for 2<sup>nd</sup> year work plan

- Work is underway to identify activities for the second year work plan, including an assessment of meetings and activities that took place during the first year work plan
- Focus remains on marketing efforts to increase exports, new product development and recycling technology focusing on sludge and skills development.

***Forecast for next 2 weeks:***

- Continued preparations for the second year work plan
- Final preparations and logistics for Marmomacc trade show
- Filter Press field day in Hebron and Bethlehem including interviews with evaluation team and company owners
- Working on an overall project scheme for filter press as an industry wide transformation
- Preparations and scheduling meetings with companies in Italy
- Meetings with potential investors interested in sludge new product development
- Initial preparations for the follow-up CIBER workshop

## Calendar of Events – August 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	Meetings with; Union of stone & marble (trade show updates), Lamar (filter press evaluation & refurbishing), Al-Misk (Filter Press construction and Maintenance)					
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
		Verona Marble Company (sludge future activities)  CIBER Workshop, Ramallah, stakeholders of the fresh Produce Industry and service providers. “Cost benefit Analysis” to the top 4 to 5 priority impediments.	Hotel Classification Workgroup Meeting (Bethlehem, TBC)  Local CIBER team meeting	Filter Press Evaluation Launch		
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
(EID)	(EID)	(EID)				
26	27	28	29	30	31	
	Workshop, Ramallah, association building and the legal environment: “other legal options” (date TBC)		Filter Press Field Day with Interviews - Hebron			
<b>September:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Digital Tourism event</li> <li>Ramallah ICT CONNECT event(s) (September 12<sup>th</sup>)</li> <li>Oracle Training Launch, (TBC, Sept 15<sup>th</sup>)</li> <li>Initial CIBER workshop scheduled (September 12<sup>th</sup>, Hebron)</li> </ul>						